

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ISO-00 SS-15 AID-05 DEAE-00 CIAE-00

INR-07 JUSE-00 NSAE-00 SNM-02 SY-05 TRSE-00 USIA-06

NSC-05 OES-03 OMB-01 HEW-02 (ISO) W

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FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5931

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 THE HAGUE 2525

STATE ALSO PASS SAODAP FOR DR. DUPONT AND NIDA FOR DR. BESTEMAN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR, NL, US, XX, UN(CND)

SUBJ: VISIT OF US DRUG ABUSE OFFICIALS TO NETHS

SUMMARY: DR. ROBERT L. DUPONT, DIRECTOR OF THE SPECIAL ACTION OFFICE FOR DRUG ABUSE PREVENTION (SAODAP) AND OF THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON DRUG ABUSE (NIDA), AND DR. KARST BESTEMAN, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF NIDA, VISITED THE NETHERLANDS AT THE INVITATION OF THE GON FOR CONSULTATIONS WITH GOVERNMENT AND PARLIAMENTARY OFFICIALS FROM 13 TO 15 MAY. THE VISIT, WHICH TOOK PLACE AT A CRITICAL POINT IN THE NETHERLANDS' REASSESSMENT OF ITS DRUG ABUSE POLICY, RESULTED IN A FRANK AND WIDE-RANGING EXCHANGE OF VIEWS AND EXPERIENCES AND, IN OUR OPINION, HAS CREATED SIGNIFICANT OPPORTUNITIES FOR US-DUTCH COOPERATION IN DRUG DEMAND-REDUCTION EFFORTS. THE VISITORS' PROGRAM INCLUDED MEETINGS AND "WORKING" SOCIAL FUNCTIONS WITH THE GON'S DRUG-ABUSE STEERING COMMITTEE, CONFIDENTIAL

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WITH THE PARLIAMENTARY SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON DRUGS, WITH A SELECT PANEL OF SCIENTISTS CONCERNED WITH DRUG AND DRUG ABUSE RESEARCH AND, MOST IMPORTANTLY, WITH KEY FORMULATORS OF THE GON'S DRUG POLICY, INCLUDING HEALTH MINISTER VORRINK AND STATE SECRETARY FOR SOCIAL

WELFARE MEIJER. POSSIBLE AREAS FOR BILATERAL COLLABORATION IN RESEARCH WERE IDENTIFIED AND AGREEMENT WAS REACHED IN PRINCIPLE FOR A JOINT MEETING OF US, DUTCH, AND CANADIAN PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICIALS TO EXPLORE MODALITIES OF ENHANCING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE UN COMMISSION ON NARCOTIC DRUGS (CND) IN DRUG DEMAND REDUCTION EFFORTSM END SUMMARY.

1. CLIMAXING A HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL AND INTENSIVE VISIT WITH A 3-HOURS MEETING WITH KEY GON OFFICIALS, INCLUDING HEALTH MINISTER VORRINK, SOCIAL WELFARE STATE SECRETARY MEIJER, AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS STATE SECRETARY BRINKHORST, DR. DUPONT, ABLY AND ELOQUENTLY SUPPORTED BY DR. BESTEMAN, EXAMINED TOGETHER WITH THEIR HOSTS A NUMBER OF CRITICAL ISSUES AFFECTING DRUG ABUSE POLICY IN THE NETHERLANDS. DR. DUPONT UNDERLINED THE NEED FOR FOCUSING ON REDUCING HEROIN DEMAND, A PROBLEM REQUIRING IMMEDIATE ATTENTION. HE EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF ADDRESSING BOTH SIDES OF THE SUPPLY-DEMAND EQUATION IN A SPIRIT OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE POLICIES YET TO BE ADOPTED BY THE NETHERLANDS TO FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS IN THIS FIELD IN OTHER COUNTRIES. RESPONDING CANDIDLY TO MINISTER VORRINK'S INVITATION FOR HIS VIEWS ON QUESTIONS OF PARTICULAR CONCERN TO THE DUTCH AT THIS TIME, DR. DUPONT OFFERED THE FOLLOWING VIEWS:

(A) ON "DECRIMINALIZATION" OF CANNABIS, THIS ISSUE HAS BEEN LARGELY MUTED IN THE U.S. AS A RESULT OF APPROACHES SUCH AS THAT TAKEN BY THE STAT OF OREGON. AMENDING THE SINGLE CONVENTION TO ALLOW FREE CANNABIS USE AS DESIRED BY THE GON, HOWEVER, PROBABLY COULD NOT RPT NOT BE ACHIEVED IN THE NEAR TERM (E.G. NOT IN LESS THAN 5 TO 10 YEARS), IF THEN, IF FOR NO OTHER REASON THAN THE INERTIA OF INTERNATIONAL BUREAUCRACY.

(B) IN THE CONTEXT OF HOLLAND'S INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, DR. DUPONT STRESSED THE NEED FOR THE NETHERLANDS UNEQUIVOCALLY TO ARTICULATE ITS POSITION AGAINST ALLOWING ITS TERRITORY TO BECOME A CENTER FOR ILLICIT INTERNATIONAL TRAFFICKING IN ANY DRUGS, INCLUDING CANNABIS. AS A MANIFESTATION OF THIS POLICY, ILLICIT TRAFFICKING SHOULD BE TACKLED WITH CONVICTION (E.G., HANDING DOWN OF MORE THAN JUST CONFIDENTIAL

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NOMINAL SENTENCES TO CONVICTED TRAFFICKERS AND NOT MERELY LEGTHENING THE PERMISSIBLE PRISON SENTENCES UNDER THE LAW); SUCH ENFORCEMENT SHOULD BE PUBLICIZED SO AS TO PUT WOULD-BE INTERNATIONAL TRAFFICKERS ON NOTICE AND TO REASSURE THE NETHERLANDS' AND ALLIES THAT IT MEANS BUSINESS.

(C) STRENGTHENING INTERNATIONAL COOPERATIVE CHANNELS, SUCH AS THE CND, IN COLLABORATION WITH COUNTRIES WHICH SHARE THE NETHERLANDS' AIMS, NOTABLY THE U.S. AND CANADA, IS AN IMPORTANT MEANS OF ENHANCING DRUG DEMAND REDUCTION EFFORTS. DR. DUPONT PROPOSED THAT THE PUBLIC HEALTH MEMBERS OF THE US, CANADIAN AND DUTCH DELEGATIONS TO THE NEXT CND SESSION MEET JOINTLY SOMETIME PRIOR TO THE SESSION SO AS TO CHART PURPOSEFUL ACTIONS THAT MIGHT BE PUR-

SUED THROUGH THE CND, A BODY WHOSE USEFULNESS IN THE DEMAND REDUCTION AREA HAS YET TO BE FULLY EXPLOITED. THE DUTCH SIGNALLED THEIR AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE WITH THIS PROPOSAL AND MENTIONED THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH A MEETING BEING HOSTED BY THE NETHERLANDS.

3. IN A MEETING WITH LEADING DUTCH RESEARCHERS ON DRUG USE AND ABUSE, THE FOLLOWING AREAS OF POTENTIAL JOINT RESEARCH OR COOPERATION WERE IDENTIFIED (NOTE: GON PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICIAL, DR. E. DEKKER, INTENDS FOLLOW UP ON THIS ITEM WHILE IN THE US IN MID-JUNE. SEE SEPTEL):

(A) STANDARDIZATION OF DEFINITIONS AND OF CERTAIN ASPECTS OF RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

(B) DRUG ABUSE TREATMENT MANAGEMENT

(C) TRAFFIC SAFETY (ESPECIALLY EFFECTS OF CANNABIS USE ON DRIVER BEHAVIOR AND DEVELOPMENT OF STANDARD MEASUREMENT CRITERIA FOR DETECTING PRESENCE AND LEVEL OF THC IN THE BLOOD)

(D) RESEARCH ON COMPOSITION OF PYROLYZED CANNABIS; EFFECTS OF THE VARIOUS COMPONENTS ON THE ORGANISM (CANNABIS ALONE AS WELL AS IN COMBINATION WITH TOBACCO.)

(E) EXCHANGE OF RESEARCHERS FOR COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION IN RESEARCH.

4. PARLIAMENTARY EXPOSURE: AT THE INVITATION OF THE SECOND
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CHAMBER'S SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON DRUG ABUSE, DR. DUPONT ADDRESSED QUESTIONS PUT TO HIM BY COMMITTEE MEMBERS DURING A TWO AND ONE HALF HOUR SESSION. THE RANGE AND SOPHISTICATION OF THE QUESTIONS PUT TO DR. DUPONT REFLECTED A KEEN LEVEL OF INTEREST AND AWARENESS AMONG MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE, WHO ARE SHORTLY TO RECEIVE THE GON'S LONG-PROMISED WHITE PAPER ON DRUG ABUSE POLICY (AN ENGLISH-LANGUAGE SUMMARY OF THE WHITE PAPER WAS PROVIDED TO US--ON A CONFIDENTIAL BASIS--FOR THE VISIT. A COPY OF THE SUMMARY HAS BEEN FORWARDED UNDER OUR A-77 FOR ATTENTION OF S/NM). THE SESSION WAS PREPARED BY AN INFORMAL WORKING DINNER THE NIGHT BEFORE AT THE CHARGE'S HOUSE WITH STATE SECRETARY MEIJER AND SEVERAL MEMBERS OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE. THE MEETING WITH THE COMMITTEE THE NEXT DAY AFFORDED AN OPPORTUNITY FOR DR. DUPONT TO UNDERLINE THE CRITICAL IMPORTANCE OF TACKLING FIRST AND FOREMOST THE HEROIN ABUSE PROBLEM, WHICH IN HIS OPINION WOULD RESPOND TO EPIDEMIOLOGICAL APPROACHES. THE COMMITTEE'S ATTENTION WAS DRAWN TO THE PRIVOTAL ROLE WHICH THE NETHERLANDS, WITH ITS STILL RELATIVELY SMALL HEROIN ADDICT POPULATION, ITS COMPACT SIZE, AND ITS WELL-DEVELOPED HEALTH DELIVERY SYSTEM, COULD EXERCISE IN DEVELOPING NEW APPROACHES TO THE PROBLEM OF DEMAND REDUCTION. IN THIS CONNECTION, DR. DUPONT AND DR. BESTEMAN BOTH EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF EXCHANGING EXPERIENCES ALSO WITH CANADA, WHICH HAS DECIDED TO

INTEGRATE ITS DRUG ABUSE TREATMENT PROGRAM INTO THE FEDERAL HEALTH DELIVERY SYSTEM.

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5. AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE PROGRAM DR. DUPONT WAS INTERVIEWED BY CORRESPONDENTS OF BOTH DUTCH WIRE SERVICES (ANP AND GPD).

6. COMMENT: THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT THE VISIT OF DR. DUPONT AND DR. BESTEMAN HAD A MAJOR IMPACT, A STIMULATIVE AND QUITE POSSIBLY CATALYTIC EFFECT ON GON THINKING TOWARD THE NARCOTICS ADDICTION PROBLEM AND THE NEED TO INCREASE COOPERATION WITH THE U.S. AS A MEANS OF COMBATTING IT. THE PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT OF DR. DUPONT AND THE EMBASSY IS THAT VISIT RESULTED IN THREE SIGNIFICANT ACCOMPLISHMENTS: A) EXPOSURE OF A LARGE NUMBER OF GON POLICY AND WORKING LEVEL OFFICIALS AND KEY PARLIAMENTARIANS TO CURRENT, AUTHORITATIVE US THINKING EXPERIENCE AND PRACTICES RE DRUG ABUSE PREVENTION, TREATMENT AND REHABILITATION, INCLUDING THE VITAL INTERRELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DRUG ENFORCEMENT AND DRUG PREVENTION PROGRAMS; B) MAKING MADAME VORRINK AND OTHER LIKE-MINDED DUTCH POLITICAL LEADERS AWARE THAT THE RAMIFICATIONS OF THE CANNABIS PROBLEM WERE MORE COMPLEX THAN THEY HAD SUPPOSED, AND THAT IT COULD NOT BE DEALT WITH SAFELY OR ADEQUATELY SIMPLY BY LEGALIZING ITS USE
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AND THEN FORGETTING ABOUT IT; AND C) AGREEMENT ON A TRILATERAL SEMI-

NAR OF US, DUTCH AND CANADIAN AUTHORITIES EARLY IN 1976, PRIOR TO THE NEXT MEETING OF THE CND.

7. MOREOVER, A NUMBER OF ISSUES HAVE COME INTO SHARPER FOCUS AS A RESULT OF THE VISIT. IT HAS SHARPENED OUR UNDERSTANDING OF GON'S DRUG POLICY AS WELL AS, WE BELIEVE, THEIR PERCEPTION OF THEIR OWN IMAGE ABROAD. THIS SHOULD HELP ENSURE THAT THE DUTCH WILL EXAMINE WITH GREATER CARE THE POSSIBLE IMPLICATIONS OF SOME OF THE POSITIONS IT HAS VOICED. IT MAY ALSO HELP DISSIPATE THE ADVERSE AND POTENTIALLY ACRIMONIOUS CLIMATE DEVELOPING ON MANY OF THESE ISSUES BETWEEN THE NETHERLANDS AND SOME OF ITS NEIGHBORS, A CLIMATE RESULTING PARTLY FROM MUTUAL MISUNDERSTANDING OF OBJECTIVES AND MOTIVES AND ONE IN WHICH IT IS DIFFICULT TO PURSUE FRUITFUL COOPERATION. WE EARNESTLY HOPE THAT THERE WILL BE EARLY AND POSITIVE FOLLOW UP TO THE INITIATIVES AND OPPORTUNITIES CREATED DURING THE JUST-CONCLUDED VISIT.

8. WE RECOMMEND THAT CONSIDERATION BE GIVEN TO INVITING KEY DUTCH PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICIALS TO VISIT THE US (AND IDEALLY ALSO CANADA) AT AN EARLY DATE FOR A FIRST-HAND LOOK AT US APPROACHES AND FOR A FURTHER EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON TOPICS OF MUTUAL CONCERN. WE WILL BE GIVING THIS SUBJECT FURTHER THOUGHT AND EXPECT TO PROPOSE MORE SPECIFIC FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS.

9. THIS MESSAGE WAS PREPARED AFTER DR. DUPONT'S DEPARTURE BUT DOES INCORPORATE HIS PERSONAL ASSESSMENT OF THE VISIT FROM THE U.S. POINT OF VIEW.
TANGUY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 26 AUG 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DRUG ABUSE, DRUG CONTROL, POLICIES, VISITS, MEETING REPORTS, INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 19 MAY 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ElyME
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975THEHA02525
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: 11652 GDS
Errors: n/a
Film Number: D750177-0017
From: THE HAGUE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t197505100/baaaafax.tel
Line Count: 247
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ElyME
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10 APR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <10 APR 2003 by Izenbel0>; APPROVED <26 SEP 2003 by ElyME>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: n/a
TAGS: SNAR, NL, US, XX, UN, (CND)
To: STATE INFO BONN
BRUSSELS
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GENEVA

Type: TE

Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006